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# The Ministry

## An Appeal to College Men

CHARLES FRANKLIN THWING

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# THE MINISTRY:
## AN APPEAL TO COLLEGE MEN

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# THE MINISTRY

## AN APPEAL TO COLLEGE MEN

BY

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This little volume is addressed to men in college who are soon to make a choice of life's calling. It seeks to be an interpretation of the conditions, an appreciation of the forces and difficulties, and a presentation of some of the opportunities, of the ministry. It is also an appeal simple and plain. It is not concerned with any special theory of the church or of the ministry. I fear that much of what I have written, though I hope not all, will seem unwarranted by my friends of the Roman Catholic Communion. I write as a Protestant and for Protestants, and also as a college president for those best men — college students.

C. F. T.

*Western Reserve University, Cleveland*
*1st December, 1916*

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# I

# ATTRACTIONS OF THE MINISTRY AS A CALLING

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# The Ministry
## An Appeal to College Men

### CHAPTER I

#### ATTRACTIONS OF THE MINISTRY AS A CALLING

MANY, weighty, and diverse are the elements of the ministry, making its work attractive to college men. These elements easily fall into two classes: the personal, or self-ward, and the altruistic.

Several of the self-ward reasons are summed up in the opportunities and advantages which the ministry offers for self-culture. This enrichment is both of the intellect and of the heart. The ministry invites to intellectual breadth. It urges one to a large knowledge. "Omniscience" is quite as much the foible of the minister as it was of Whewell of Cambridge a half



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century ago! No other profession so worthily draws its strength and inspiration from every part. The world is its creditor. Whether it is indebted more to literature or to nature may be a question, but it is certainly indebted much to each. It may be said of the minister that "Nothing is foreign to him which relates to man." Some of the greatest preachers of recent times, as Richard Salter Storrs, Finney, and Dwight, have in their early years been students of the law. They have said that their legal studies contributed to their service in preaching and personal relations. The early ministers in America were largely the physicians of the colonial communities. The clerical calling aided in the performance of the duties of the medical. The ministry is and represents the study of man as man, in body, mind and soul.

The culture of the ministry tends also to intellectual depth. The themes of the minister are the profoundest;



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they arouse the deepest thoughts. The minister touches upon the character and nature of God, upon the revelation of God to man, and upon the possibility and the degree of man's knowledge of God. The minister is concerned with the qualities of the human mind, the relation of the intellectual to the emotional faculty, of the emotional to the volitional, of the volitional in turn to the intellectual. The conscience, the imagination, the affections, every faculty of the human constitution are the field of his study. His theme is the entire moral and spiritual constitution. He should be the ablest psychologist.

"If then," writes Professor Edwards A. Park in his essay, "Dignity and Importance of the Preacher's Work," "the acme of the Creator's glories is to be the most familiar of the preacher's themes; if all human sciences are but ancillary to that revealed system which the preacher is to explain and enforce,



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if eternity and the resurrection, and God, and Christ, the Sovereign, the Judge, the Saviour, are to be the great objects upon which his mind is to dilate, then it is well to require of him that he be not a novice, but a man of greatness of spirit, of high aims and large compass of thought. If a vigorous intellect be needed for the study of human jurisprudence, it is doubly requisite for the examination of that law according to which all our wise codes of legislation are framed; which is illustrated by precedents more numerous and complicated than are contained in all our juridical reports; which has such relations to man as to call for a close scrutiny into his nature and character; and such relations to God as demand a comprehensive view of his rectitude on the one hand, and his grace on the other, and of that signal invention by which he can even honor the law by remitting its penalties."[1]

[1] Preacher and Pastor. Introductory Essay by Professor Edwards A Park D.D., p. 15.



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The means, too, which the ministry offers for growth in self-culture are nobly indicated in an address given by President Eliot to the Divinity Club of Harvard University in April, 1907, on The Ministry. President Eliot says:

"A devoted and active minister may grow in wisdom and power all his days. An enlarging conception of truth, a wider sympathy, and an ampler hope are the influences which make men grow as years advance. In no profession can a man arrive at the whole truth; but in all professions the way to win more truth is one and the same. The modern world has not arrived at ultimate truth; but it has learned the way to discover, little by little, step by step, more truth. It is the way of the inductive philosophy. A young university graduate in these days who has mastered this way to new truth, — new to him, or perhaps new to the world, — and believes in this way, has in him one great element of perpetual



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growth, and the kind of growth will be the same, whatever his profession, — the church, the law, medicine, engineering, architecture, business, or whatever other calling. In any profession we now know the way to personal mental and moral enlargement. The cooperative spirit is also in every profession a way to enlargement, and this spirit belongs to no profession in higher degree than to the ministry; and the hopeful, optimistic spirit is enlarging, and no profession ought more perfectly and constantly to foster this spirit than the ministry, because the ministry is always dealing with the best sides of human nature and the best aspects of human society, and is always holding up and promulgating the highest spiritual ideals. A minister who is not an optimist must have been looking back and not forward, down and not up." [1]

The ministry is indeed a calling

[1] Harvard Bulletin, 22 May, 1907.



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which broadens and deepens the intellect. It develops also every part of a man's character. The heart becomes tenderer and more responsive without softness, the conscience more keen without hypercriticalness, the will stronger and firmer without stubbornness, and the æsthetic faculty more appreciative without eccentricity.

A second element in the ministry rendering it attractive to college men relates to its practical character. This reason has special force not only in itself, but also when united with its intellectual character. The ministry is a most fitting union of the practical and the theoretical. A certain part of the minister's work disciplines the intellectual, and another the administrative or executive talent. In the morning of each day he is a student at his desk. In the afternoon of each day, he is a man of affairs, on the street, in the shop, in the home. If in the morning he is an interpreter of wisdom, in



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the afternoon he is a reader of living epistles. He associates with men under the most diverse and characteristic conditions. He stands by the side of the criminal in the jail and at the bar, and also by the side of the dying saint. The minister offers the consolations of the Bible and of Christian truth to those who mourn. He is a participant in the joy of the wedding. He is the intimate associate of the young, and also, though he may himself be young, he is the pastor and guide of those who are many years his senior. He is called upon to speak a word of cheer to the despairing heart, a word of caution to the ambitious, to give a suggestion of guidance to the erring, and a word of command to those who ought to obey him. He is called upon to deal with men as individuals, and also in masses. The financial, benevolent, social and spiritual work of the Church is his. He visits from house to house, speaking to one person; he stands in the pulpit



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speaking to hundreds or thousands. He is called upon literally to do everything. He closes the eyes of the dead, administers upon estates, serves as legal guardian for children, officiates as a member of the school committee of the town, and inaugurates philanthropic measures for the improvement of the town, the municipality or of the commonwealth. No work to him is remote. Scholarly employments tend to draw their followers away from the practical concerns of life. This is the influence of the law and of teaching. The tendency of business is, on the contrary, antagonistic to scholarly pursuits. The ministry unites all these diverse elements. It at once tends to develop the intellectual and the practical in human character.

The public influence of the minister constitutes a further reason or element of attractiveness. Beyond the limits of his own church and pulpit, in the city or town of his residence, he is an



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outstanding citizen. The state is indebted to the clergy for their influence in promoting the welfare of the people. The minister supplies, it has well been said, a want too profound to be reached by mere civil enactment, too radical to be left to the care of philanthropists specially devoted to philanthropy. The state is indebted to the clergyman for his influence in the education of the people. Through their preaching clergymen are the educators of the people. The colleges of the higher, as well as the schools of primary, education, if not established and governed by clergymen, have at least received a large share of their power from them. From the clergy have, till recent years, been drawn college presidents. Ordination vows have usually preceded the oath of the academic office. The list includes those who have been the noblest of ministers and the most efficient of presidents. Lord and Smith of Dartmouth, Walker of



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Harvard, Wayland of Brown, Seelye of Amherst, the elder Dwight and Porter of Yale, McCosh of Princeton, — to go no farther than the last century, — represent great leaders in church and in education. In service obscure and local as well as conspicuous, the clergy have helped to establish State school systems, to found and to endow colleges and academies, and to administer educational trusts with discretion, progressiveness and effectiveness.

The opportunities which education offers to the minister are typical of other opportunities. Charities, and all reform movements, represent a proper field of his influence and service. As the ex-President of Harvard University has said, speaking to men who were soon to become clergymen:

"The minister can be highly serviceable. He has the great function of preaching, the weekly opportunity of setting before a group of well-disposed



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men and women the best ethical views on all human experiences, common or exceptional, and the highest motives for right action in all the emergencies of life. The good preacher enlightens, cheers, and guides. He may sometimes denounce or condemn; but, in general, he shows men and women how to walk through this world lovingly and nobly. He may sometimes be a warning prophet, but he is chiefly an inspirer of high motives and of good ruling sentiments. In those denominations which permit extemporaneous public prayer the minister possesses that tremendous means of influence. 'Leading in prayer' worthily is the most exalted effort of the human mind. The power of such prayer is pervasive and enduring beyond all imagination. It may at any moment give to the listener a thrill which runs through all his being, and determines the quality, not only of his own life, but of many of those lives which will be touched by his. The



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minister may be infinitely serviceable through the advice he gives in private to persons anxious, bereaved, tempted, or gone astray. This function of advising requires sympathy, insight, and, above all, wisdom; and these qualities are gained or perfected only through experience, so that the young minister may hope to gain more and more of this influence as his years increase. The minister may also be greatly serviceable by attending to the social functions of a modern church. A well-organized, large city church has a wide-spread effect for social improvement through its various schools, clubs, leagues, entertainments, and hospitalities. Every active church is a centre of good works for the improvement of society, and offers to young people and new-comers many safe-guards against evil, as well as incitements to good. When we consider that ethical progress is the only real progress in human society, — material gains being



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chiefly good as they contribute to, or supply the necessary conditions of, moral gains,—we realize how direct and immediate is the work of the church, and of the minister at the head of the church, not only for the uplifting of individual men and women, but for the progress of mankind towards nobler living."

A further element in the attractiveness of the ministry is its opportunities for the cultivation of literature. The literary fertility of the clerical far exceeds that of any other profession. The number of volumes written by ministers is much larger than those composed by both lawyers and doctors. This is true not only in respect to technical works but also in respect to works which belong to literature proper. The clergymen sketched in Doctor Sprague's volumes, "Annals of the American Pulpit," wrote nearly six thousand separate volumes (exactly five thousand nine hundred and



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thirty-eight). Many of these were single sermons, and the large proportion was of a religious character. The average number, therefore, belonging to each clergyman is five publications. The one hundred and eighty-one Methodist divines produced sixty-nine works, about one-third of a publication each. The one hundred and seventy-one Baptists are credited with four hundred and seven, or somewhat more than two publications each. The two hundred and fifty-five Presbyterians wrote nine hundred and seventy-six works, or nearly four apiece. The one hundred and fifty-two Episcopalians furnish six hundred and seventy-three publications, or slightly more than four each. The three hundred and forty-nine Congregationalists are the authors of twenty-eight hundred and twenty-nine publications, averaging somewhat more than eight for each minister. And the eighty-one Unitarian divines claim nine hundred and



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eighty-four works, a proportion which places twelve to the credit of each.[1]

In reference to the greater literary activity of the members of the clerical than of any other profession, it is to be said that sermons possess deeper public interest than the discussion of cases in either law or medicine. Therefore a larger number of sermons are published

[1] Of the Baptist clergymen, sixteen wrote one book each; twelve, two books each; seven, three books each; nine, four books each; six, five books each; nine, six books each; three, seven books each; two, eight books each; one, nine books; and one, ten; two, fifteen books each; one, eighteen books; one, twenty-three; one, twenty-nine; one, thirty-one; one, thirty-five; and one, thirty-six. Of the Episcopalians, eight wrote one book each; eight, two books each; nine, three books each; four, four books each; nine, five books each; five, six books each; seven, seven books each; three, eight books each; three, nine books each; five, ten books each; two, eleven books each; five, twelve books each; one, fourteen; one, fifteen; and one, sixteen books; two, eighteen each; and one, twenty; one, twenty-six; one, twenty-eight; one, thirty; one, thirty-two; one, forty-one; and one, forty-five books. Among the Presbyterian ministers, eighty-eight have written from one to five books each; twenty-two from six to ten books each; thirteen, from eleven to fifteen books each; six, from sixteen to twenty books each; two, from twenty-one to thirty books each; and five, from thirty-one to eighty books each. Of the Congregational ministers, eighty-eight have produced from one to five books each; thirty-five, from six to ten books each; seventeen, from eleven to fifteen books each; twenty, from sixteen to twenty; thirteen, from twenty-one to thirty; and ten, from thirty-one to one hundred books each. Of this denomination, as well as of all, Increase Mather seems to be the most voluminous author. His name is attached to no less than three hundred and eighty-two publications. Of the Unitarian clergymen, twelve have written from one to five books each; four, six books each; seven, seven books each; three, eight books each; seven, nine books each; five, ten books each; one, eleven; one, twelve; one, thirteen; two, fourteen; two, fifteen; two, sixteen; one, seventeen; three, eighteen; two, nineteen; one, twenty-one books; and one each, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-nine, thirty-two, thirty-three, fifty-one, fifty-three, fifty-six, and ninety-one books.



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than of medical or legal addresses. But further, as a rule, clergymen are better educated than either physicians or lawyers. All the older colleges — Harvard, William and Mary, and Yale, — and not a few of those of recent establishment, were founded with the special design of training ministers. More than one-half of the early graduates of the two principal colleges of New England entered the ministry. Today, in the cities and in the rural districts, a larger proportion of the clergy than of the members of other vocations are found to be college-bred. It is evident that the more liberal the education possessed by those pursuing any calling, the greater will be their literary activity. As clergymen, therefore, are better educated, the volumes they write and publish outnumber the volumes issued by those of other professions.

And yet, perhaps, the most important reason of this productiveness



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lies in the consideration that the work of the clergyman naturally trains him for a literary life. His duties oblige him to reflect upon the fundamental problems of society. He is compelled to consider the great questions of philosophy, of theology, of ethics, of science, and of education. His labors for the pulpit and in the parish cause him to ponder upon matters of the gravest importance, which invite elaborate treatment. As Park, in writing of the "Dignity and Importance of the Preacher's Work," has said: "As a man, as a scholar, he must be able to draw analogies to moral truth from the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms; but as a Christian orator he should be at home in the philosophy of the human intellect. His appropriate work begins with those studies, which were the end of many of the labors of such men as Descartes, Stewart and Brown. He is to answer some of the fundamental questions in



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theology by a reference to the analyses of intellectual operations. He must search out the laws of mind as they are developed in the structure of language, and must learn to interpret the Bible from the principles of mental suggestion. He must investigate the nature of the intellectual powers as he is to use them, and the susceptibilities as he is to address them in the pulpit. He must learn how to instruct, to convince, to enchain attention, to keep fast hold upon the memory. Not satisfied with the bare rules of rhetoric, he must seek for the reason of these rules in the nature of man. Nor is he to linger too long upon our intellectual faculties. His higher theme is our moral constitution. He must learn how to touch the secret springs of the heart; how to evoke that volition which will be followed by an eternity of regard; how to check the indulgence of that feeling which brings in its train an eternity of punishment. The ex-



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alted and impressive designation of his office 'is the care of *souls*.' Immortality, free agency, interminable joy and pain, such are the themes of his prolonged attention."[1] The training, therefore, of the clergyman fits him for a literary life. Hence, his activity in the creation of literature is great.

The reasons for the literary productiveness of the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Unitarian ministers in comparison with the ministers of other denominations, are to a degree similar to the reasons suggested for the greater literary productiveness of the whole clerical profession. A large proportion of them have received a college training. This education directly tends to foster activity in literature. Education broadens the field of knowledge, as well as quickens the intellectual forces, making the creation of literature possible. Education also influences one to maintain a high literary standard

[1] Preacher and Pastor. Introductory Essay by Professor Edwards A. Park, D.D., p. 14.



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in all his writing. Therefore, the superior education of the Congregational, Presbyterian, and Unitarian clergyman promotes their literary activity. In reference to the clergymen of the Unitarian Church, it is to be observed that the period of their labor falls within the last hundred years. This is a period in which the general literary influences have been far more potent than in any previous time. The mechanical means for the production of books have greatly increased. Every denomination, in common with the Unitarian, has been affected by these literary influences, but the Unitarian has by reason of its recent origin been specially moulded by them. Harvard College, moreover, which near the beginning of the century was the centre of Unitarianism, has specially emphasized the study and production of literature. Her professors have inspired students to lead a literary life. Her graduates include the ablest and



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most distinguished men of American letters. The clergymen of that church, therefore, to which she has till recent years specially adhered, have to a large extent devoted themselves in the midst of their formal vocation to literary pursuits.

I wish also to say that the ministry offers rich rewards in the love which the church gives to him who serves it well. Such love approaches to the intimacy of the relationships of the home. Let me cite a single example. At the conclusion of a score of years in his Hartford pastorate, the great Bushnell said to his church:

"To sum up all, then, brethren, I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy for your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now. You have been immovable and true in your fidelity to me. Assailed by powerful combinations, you have never lost your



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balance, but have given an example of patience, moderation, and firmness, in which I must do violence to my Christian feeling as a pastor not to offer you my hearty congratulations. You have never been a captious people. . . . You have never been inattentive to my wants, but have always kept me on the sunny side of comfort. Three times have you raised my salary without any suggestion from me — from twelve hundred dollars to two thousand dollars. A few months after you had liquidated your debt by a heavy subscription, when my health was failing from protracted labor, you advanced me the money necessary to defray my expenses for a year in Europe, continued my salary, and supplied the pulpit yourselves. Again you did the same the last year during my absence of months in a journey to the West, not to speak of the innumerable tokens of interest in me and my family shown by methods more private. And, what is more



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grateful to me than all besides, I think you have endeavored to extract some spiritual benefit from my unworthy and very defective ministry." [1]

The love which the church at Hartford gave Bushnell is the love which in kind thousands of churches are waiting to give to their ministers. Such love is among the mightiest consolations and contentments of any man.

A sixth reason or element of attractiveness in the ministry, to which I shall briefly allude, relates to the ministry as an essential element in the progress of Christianity in the world. It is not to be denied that Christianity would progress if the ministry were abolished; but it is certainly true that if officers are essential to a victorious army and leaders important in any undertaking, ministers are important and essential for the advance of the Christian religion. In his speech in

[1] Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, p. 286.



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the Girard College case, Mr. Webster asks:

"And where was Christianity ever received, where were its truths ever poured into the human heart, where did its waters, springing up into everlasting life, ever burst forth, except in the track of a Christian ministry? Did we ever hear of an instance, does history record an instance, of any part of the globe Christianized by lay preachers, or 'lay teachers'? And, descending from kingdoms and empires to cities and countries, to parishes and villages, do we not all know, that wherever Christianity has been carried and wherever it has been taught, by human agency, that agency was the agency of ministers of the Gospel? It is all idle, and a mockery, to pretend that any man has respect for the Christian religion who yet derides, reproaches, and stigmatizes all its ministers and teachers." The ministry may be thus called divine, for it is a power ordained of God for the



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perpetuation of His cause in the earth. It is also human, because the field of its service is humanity. The alternative is on the one side a progressive Christianity and a well-equipped clergy, and on the other side no progressive Christianity and no ministry.

But, in addition, the minister, serving as missionary, has added languages to the world's tongues, has made archæological, geological, and other scientific investigations, has enlarged the world's commerce, has established schools and colleges, has mapped out continents and islands, has served as counsellor to kings and emperors. The minister bears the blessings of a Christian civilization to dark continents.

I fear that these elements of attractiveness to which I have referred are placed upon a key-note altogether too low. They seem not only self-*ward*, but also self-*ish*, and several of them, which might be called altruistic, may be easily interpreted as pretty personal.



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But I do wish to say that the ministry is a mighty challenge to the man of great strength. For it may represent the noblest self-sacrifice. The minister gives life, because he has lost it. But he is not to give it in order to find it. Any such purpose vitiates the self-surrender. All the noblest sacrifices of noble souls for high ideals of human betterment are a part of the heritage of the minister. The place of work may be in India or Alaska or New York. The kind of work may be medical, evangelistic, or educational. The associations of the work may be historic as in Cairo or Calcutta, or local and obscure as in the South Sea Islands; but whatever and wherever and however the work is, the service is a challenge for a man to live largely, to give and to do his best. Such a challenge quickens, ennobles, purifies, exalts.

Such are some of the rich compensations belonging to the minister as the



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leader of the church that seeks, through its work, to bless the world. They are the blessings which, whether broad or narrow, thin or deep — and they are more broad than narrow, and rather profound than superficial — every minister, through the grace of God, may claim as the reward of his headship under Christ in the working church.



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# II

# OBJECTIONS TO THE MINISTRY AS A CALLING

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## CHAPTER II

### OBJECTIONS TO THE MINISTRY AS A CALLING

YET, despite these things which make the work of the ministry attractive to college men, there are causes repelling college men from this great calling.

Among these causes, I name, first, the belief that success depends upon meretricious qualities. Success does not, of course, depend upon meretricious qualities, but young men are inclined to believe that success does so depend. When one, a score of years ago, saw the immense congregations of DeWitt Talmage in Brooklyn, and the relatively small congregations of Richard Salter Storrs, and compared the quality of the sermons of the one preacher with the quality of the sermons of the other preacher, the young man of brain was inclined to think



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that he could succeed in securing a large following only by having and using those qualities that do not command the highest respect. For the success of meretriciousness does show itself in what is known as sensational preaching. Sensational preaching, as Brooks has said, is "simply the effort of a man who has no faith in his office or in the essential power of truth to keep himself before people's eyes by some kind of intellectual fantasticalness. It is a pursuit of brightness and vivacity of thought for its own sake, which seems to come from a certain almost desperate determination of the sensational minister that he will not be forgotten. I think there is a great deal of nervous uneasiness of mind which shows a shaken confidence in one's position. It struggles for cleverness. It lives by making points. It is fatal to that justice of thought which alone in the long run commands confidence and carries weight. The man who is



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always trying to attract attention and be brilliant counts the mere sober effort after absolute truth and justice dull. It is more tempting to be clever and unjust than to be serious and just. Every preacher has constantly to make his choice which he will be. It does not belong to men, like angels, to be 'ever bright and fair,' together. And the anxious desire for glitter is one of the signs of the dislodgment of the clerical position in our time." [1]

Such interpretations every thoughtful college man is making, and, as Brooks says, they influence him to turn his back upon the calling.

Second, the young man in college is inclined to be repelled from the ministry because of what he regards as a strife for the first places. Such strife does exist. Ministers are human, and humanity is ambitious. Such ambitions for the highest pulpits and the greatest synagogues are unworthy and

[1] Lectures on Preaching delivered before the Divinity School of Yale College. Phillips Brooks, pp. 248–9.



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unmanly. The young man of heart and brain and love for noblest service, beholding this strife, is repelled from association in work with those who are thus striving.

A third reason is that the student sees that the period of usefulness in the ministry is short. He hears much about the "dead line of fifty." In the profession of the law and of medicine, he knows that the best work of most men is done after they have rounded their half century; he also knows that in the ministry the call is for young men. He hesitates to enter a vocation, in which the older he grows after a certain age, the less acceptable he will probably prove to be. The reason for the church calling for young men is possibly not far to seek. Bishop Simpson has spoken of the causes which he believes contribute to the popularity of young men as compared with the popularity of old men. He believes that one cause is the neglect of study



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on the part of some of the older ministers. This neglect of study is due to a lack of that stimulus which other professions offer. Society likes to be stirred and excited, and youth has a great power of exciting. Youth is more in earnest. The young minister is popular, it may also be said, because a congregation likes to see in their minister development and growth. The young man they expect to grow, and usually he meets the expectation. The old man they do not expect to grow, and usually he more than meets the expectation. The young man is a constant appeal to the sense of gratified hopefulness.

A fourth reason that deters young men from entering the ministry may lie in the impression that only men of weak brains enter this calling. Professor J. P. Mahaffey, in his little book "Modern Preaching," writes of the want of ability in our preachers. He says:



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"No doubt the majority of mankind is wanting in this quality; the average of intellect is low, and most people are very dull; but when we find so many men professing to teach from the pulpit who are totally unable to frame a sustained argument, — nay, more, unable to understand it when put before them, — we cannot but conclude that the abler young men of our day do not adopt this profession, and that our preachers, as a body, are below even the average intellect. I remember very well — indeed painfully well — a class of divinity students which I instructed in the Epistle to the Romans, and after laboring a whole term with all possible care, and making them go over the argument, and write it out, and rehearse it, they confessed to me in a body at the end of the term that they had made no advance in it whatever, for that *none of them was able to follow an argument.* They were not many, — eight, I think, — and such a case only



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occurred to me once in many years' teaching; but in every year there were some men of this kind, men who deliberately adopted the profession of religious teaching, with the consciousness that they could not possibly understand what they had to teach. They were, in fact, adopting this profession because too dull for any other." [1]

The impression of Professor Mahaffey is the common impression; but I believe it is false. In proof of the falseness of this impression, let me say several years ago I made an examination of the college rank and scholarship of the students in the Theological Seminary at Andover. The result proved that a very high standard of undergraduate scholarship was maintained by the large majority. Of the fifty-two Andover students who had received their first degree (excluding two, one of whom never knew and the other of whom had forgotten, his

[1] Modern Preaching. J. P. Mahaffey, pp. 51, 52.



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college rank), only six ranked in the lower half of their college class. Of the forty-six who stood in the first half, thirty-four ranked in the first third, twenty-eight in the first fourth, twenty-three in the first fifth, twenty in the first sixth, fifteen in the first seventh, thirteen in the first eighth and ninth, eleven in the first tenth, ten in the first eleventh, nine in the first twelfth, and eight in the first twentieth. Of these eight scholars of the highest relative standing, one ranked fourth in a class of seventy-six, one fourth in a class of eighty-one, one third in a class of seventy-four, one fourth in a class of ninety-four, one first in a class of sixteen, one first in a class of thirty-four, one second in a class of eighty, and one third in a class of one hundred and fifty.

The most potent cause of this error of public opinion is, in my judgment, the division which the public mind believes necessarily exists between



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piety and noble intellectual attainments. A distinguished professor of homiletics has said that the idea prevails that a sermon of great piety cannot be a sermon of eminent intellectual excellence. The same idea obtains in regard to college men. Piety and scholarship are regarded as contradictories. Piety is looked upon as first cousin to effeminacy, and effeminacy and intellectual greatness are antipodes. Those students who enter the ministry are, of course, as a body, distinguished for their piety above many of their classmates, and hence it is inferred that their scholarship is low and their ability small.

A second cause of the misconception is the comparative poverty of students of theology. As a class, they are less wealthy, or more poor, than other professional students. About five-sixths of the members of the Congregational seminaries are aided by the Education Society. From the pos-



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session of wealth by an educated young man of pure life flow those graces of manner which go to make up what is, superficially called, a gentleman. In judging of the intellectual worth of students, the common mind lays more emphasis upon these exterior accomplishments than upon the mental attainments which are not so apparent. Theological students, possessing these accomplishments in a less degree than other professional students, are, therefore, ranked by the public sentiment as correspondingly inferior in respect to intellectual worth.

Another fact dissuading men from the ministry lies in the hard field of an insufficient livelihood. The salary is usually small, and may be so small as to make living difficult. Salaries in the ministry have always been small, and, as in teaching, will probably remain small; but present conditions render their purchasing power slight.

A small stipend rests with especial



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weight upon the minister's wife. The wife of a minister of the present time is usually or frequently a college graduate. She is somewhat less fitted to undertake all the duties of housekeeping and home-making than was her mother or grandmother, who was herself also the help-mate of a clergyman. The college man in reflecting upon his future calling is inclined to give, and ought to give, a large place to the happiness of his wife. When he finds that the clerical income will be small and the work hard, he comes to the conclusion that he ought not to ask her to share the hardship with him. He keeps his wife and declines the calling.

There is much of truth in this interpretation. But be it also said, that most churches do pay a salary which allows the minister to live in the way in which the better part of the church lives. If the well-to-do families of the parish exist on an income of only five hundred



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dollars, the parish asks the minister to accept of its lot. If the abler families use five thousand dollars a year, it is probable that his own salary would be of this sum. A parish seldom allows a minister or his family to starve!

I am also led to believe that a cause having larger influence than it is charged with is that college men believe the church has lost its leadership in the higher affairs of the community. Whether the leadership be lost or not, the fact is that college men are inclined to believe that the leadership is lost and that it has passed over to educational and other forces. This conception, false or true, diverts men from the ministry quite as completely as if the leadership had been lost.

One of many students who have written me on the subject says, "The ministry has not the allurements or inducements for young men at the present time that it has hitherto possessed. The minister is no longer



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the leader of the community or of his congregation, in thought, in culture, or even in spirituality. He is no longer the pattern for his flock in the realistic sense of previous generations. A young man who enters the ministry today, therefore, can scarcely attain to the eminence or wield the influence he might have done fifty years ago; nor can he expect to reach that degree of eminence or even influence to which he might attain in other lines of activity. The personal incentive to high achievement is consequently lacking. The ministry, in its ideal state, is quite altruistic. The minister must work for his congregation with only secondary regard for his own wants and likes. The degree of religion and morality which he must exercise, many men believe, is too high for a man's greatest degree of efficiency. By devoting more attention to practical, workable problems, instead of specializing, as it were, upon religion, greater



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results might be secured. Then, from a financial or mercenary standpoint — a standpoint which must always be considered to some extent — the ministry has few allurements. The salary is, and must continue to be, a secondary consideration. Perhaps I might sum up the objections to entering the ministry by saying that, in the opinions of many men, the end does not justify the means, that the extra good they might do mankind, including themselves, by entering the ministry, is not sufficient to justify the sacrifice to themselves in money and pleasure."

A seventh preventing cause is that the young man in college fears the ministry means the surrender of his intellectual independence. The student boasts of such independence. Scholarship is monarchical and he is the monarch. Scholarship has all the monarchy of a democracy and all the democracy of a monarchy. But the student looks upon the ministry as a



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condition into which he enters by signing a creed, and in which he stays only by continued adherence to that standard. In the denominational papers he reads of a student whom he knew ten years ago, who has just retired from the ministry by reason of his failure in an examination before an ecclesiastical council. He feels that to enter certain branches of the work of the Church he has to submit to rather severe intellectual trials and to arbitrary moral tests. Thus he reasons, and though his premises may be false, he regards his logic as true and the conclusion as necessary.

An eighth reason is similar. It is the fear of the student that he may be obliged to surrender his practical independence. The student knows that the minister is the servant of the congregation, and he knows also that the congregation is composed of hundreds or even of thousands of individuals. He knows that it will be his duty as far as possible to please each one of the



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individuals of his future congregations. He knows that if anyone becomes angry with or grieved at him, the result may be of extreme pain or suffering to himself. He knows that he lacks the right to command. He knows that if he attempts to be independent, unless his positions are taken with great care, he necessarily gives offense. Seen from the college period, such dependence becomes extremely irksome. He desires to be his own master. Seen through the lenses of college rules and tutors, the period when life and life's freedom shall be his, appears extremely attractive. To bring into this future period of liberty the subserviency of the ministry is extremely irksome.

But the ground of the fear of the loss of intellectual and practical independence is fast passing. The college man having become minister can now stand fearless, as Luther, in each of the leading churches. To quote again from an address of President Eliot:



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"Freedom of thought and speech for a minister is a somewhat recent acquisition. In former times a young man enlisted in the services of a given church or denomination, and after that enlistment was subject for life to the peculiar discipline and dogmas of that church or denomination. He joined the Roman Church, or the Anglican Church, or the Lutheran Church for life, and had no expectation of changing his opinions or ever questioning the authority of the church with which he had united. There is now a much greater freedom of choice among denominations for the young man who wants to be a minister. The young Harvard graduate who thinks he would like to be a minister may make his choice among the denominations in accordance with his own temperament, capacities, and intellectual needs, securing that degree of freedom in the future which he personally desires, or needs, for his best mental and spiritual



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development. He must make this first choice with wisdom and well-grounded confidence in himself, also he may sow the seed of grave afflictions in his subsequent career. In many Protestant denominations the bonds of creed and canon, and even of ritual, have been much relaxed of late years; while in several denominations the minister, once admitted to full standing, enjoys an almost perfect freedom within the limits of gentle manners and of just consideration for the freedom of others. The great progress made within a generation in Biblical criticism, in the comparative study of religions, and in the history of Christianity, has naturally led to a great increase in freedom of thought and speech, not only in the various religious denominations themselves but in society at large, and has furnished new grounds for that universal toleration which mankind first arrived at through centuries-long experience of the physical and mental



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horrors of religious intolerance. For more than a century past all history, philosophy, science, and poetry have been reinforcing and amplifying the policy of toleration and the demand of civilized mankind for freedom in religious, as well as political, thought and action. The profession of the ministry has fully shared this general progress of mankind towards freedom. If, then, the young Harvard graduate determines wisely at the start what amount of freedom of thought he really needs, and is likely to need, for the satisfaction of his religious nature, he need not fear that he will not enjoy as a minister an adequate freedom of thought and speech."

A further reason turning college men away from the ministry is the attractiveness of business and of the results of success in business. The age is a material age, with a large element of idealism. The world is in process of development. Vast commercial and



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industrial concerns are organized and are dominant. Such undertakings demand and attract able college graduates.

Another class of causes — the fourth — preventing men from entering the profession of the ministry is found in the attractiveness of other social professions. For, in our times, two callings which have direct human and humane relationships, have emerged. They are found in the Young Men's Christian Association and the Social Settlement. These forms of service are commanding the college men who thirty or twenty, or possibly ten years ago, would have entered the ministry. These works require, in preparation for them, a mind well trained and a heart devoted to the moral welfare of man. The appeal they make is based on a broader human foundation than is found in the ordinary ministry. Their field of work more usually lies in the city. Urban problems and conditions are more attractive to the mind of the young graduate than



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the rural. Be it also said that no small part of the endeavor of these two associations does embody Christ's command of loving one's neighbor as one's self. A copy of the magazine called "Human Engineering" lies before me. It represents service for men more wise, supported by appropriations more liberal, and gives promise of a service more effective than a single ordinary church, or perhaps a federation of churches, could offer or accomplish.

The ample opportunities for work in other callings than the clerical, in the old traditional professions, and in the new, like engineering, architecture, journalism, must in any comparative survey be included. About one-half of the graduates of American colleges are entering business. Industrialism and commerce are becoming more comprehensive in their field, more complex in their methods, more forceful in their workings. Such conditions demand men of minds well disciplined and of



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character of high resolve. Business requires the educated man. In this large proportion of graduates, therefore, entering business, are found many who, a generation ago, would have become clergymen.

Such, as it seems to me, are some of the reasons constraining able men, who are becoming graduates of historic colleges, to turn to other professions than the clerical as a career. They are reasons diverse, comprehensive, forceful. They embody conditions, financial, social, religious, which deserve most serious consideration. No one should select the great calling without weighing them.



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# III

# QUALITIES NECESSARY IN THE MAN CHOOSING THE MINISTRY

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## CHAPTER III

### QUALITIES NECESSARY IN THE MAN CHOOSING THE MINISTRY

WHAT are the qualities and elements which the college man should demand of himself as necessary for his entering the ministry? I wish to name five.

First, the student should find in himself a sense of good fellowship. His life as a minister will be spent with, as well as for, men. With them he lives in order to make their life richer and finer. To secure this result, he is to be with them not simply in exterior relations; he is to be with them in sympathetic thinking and feeling. He is to be able to appreciate their point of view, to take account of their prejudices, to have a tear for their suffering and a smile for their joys. Of course this is only saying that the college man who proposes to become a



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minister should demand of himself a high type of the gentleman. I do not mean the conventional gentleman, although it is well for the clergyman to be the conventional gentleman, but I mean that noblest quality of substitution by which the college man can enter into the minds and hearts of those whom he serves. The saint's raptures should not be remote from him; the temptations of the fallen he should be able to appreciate; the downward gravitation of sensualism and of materialism he should be able to interpret. The college man, who, as he thinks of his fitness for the work of the minister, finds a mighty sense of good fellowship in himself, should, content with this discovery, pass on to further self-examination.

One who finds he has a liking for bringing things to pass may fittingly think of the ministry as his calling. For the minister is to do things. He is an executive. His church is a field



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to be cultivated. His church is a force to be worked. His church is a constituency to be formed, informed and enriched. His church is a community; it is also a part of a community:—the relation of the smaller community and the larger is to be made nobly and mutually beneficent. The minister may be insistent upon his own attention to details; he may be concerned only with policies, movements, tendencies. But, in either case, results are to be had. The church is to bring forth works meet not only for repentance, but for edification also. The college man who contemplates the ministry should be an executive, an administrator. If he find in himself a liking to do things in his college class, in his clubs, in his societies, which make for the efficiency of the organization, he can assure himself that he has ability for bringing things to pass. Football captains make first-rate pastors.

In his inventory, too, of his fitnesses



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for the clerical life, the college man will not forget the place which public speaking fills in this life. That place is large, and that place represents a constant and inevitable duty. The pulpit becomes with each passing decade more unique; it now represents the only place in which a man regularly and constantly addresses the community. The sermon takes on all the forms of literary and rhetorical art. Its conditions are now interpreted in a large freedom. Almost every subject which is germane to the welfare of man is believed to be appropriate for presentation in a sermon. But, under all these diversities remains the one controlling fact that the minister is a speaker to the people. The college man, therefore, in his voyage of self-discovery, is to feel sure of his adaptiveness to public address. The one essential element which he has to consider is his ability and liking to talk sense to several or many men in an interesting way.



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The talk which he gives to his fellow students may be superficial or profound, simple or ornate, illustrated with stories and made bright with witticisms, or plain and straightforward, teeming with suggestions or narrow in its application — whatever may be its character or content, if the college man likes to talk and is able to talk to the interest of the group which gathers about him, he can feel reasonably convinced that he possesses a faculty most important in the ministry.

Furthermore, this man is to embody a high type of the gentleman. And who and what is the gentleman? The gentleman is the man who appreciates the best which life offers. Appreciation is both intellectual, emotional, volitional. It is discrimination *plus* sympathy. It contains a dash of admiration. It recognizes and adopts the best in every achievement, — the arts of literature, poetry, sculpture, painting, architecture. The cultivated



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person seeks out the least unworthy in the unworthy, and the most worthy in that which is at all worthy. The person of cultivation knows, compares, relates, judges. He has standards, and he applies them to things, measures, methods. He is able to discriminate and to feel the difference between the Parthenon and the Pantheon, between a poem of Tennyson and one of William Watson. His moral nature is fine, as his intellectual is honest. He is filled with reverence for truth, duty, righteousness. He is humble, for he knows how great is truth, how imperative duty. He is modest, for he respects others. He is patient with others and with himself, for he knows how transcendent is the right. He can be silent when in doubt. He can speak alone when truth is unpopular. He is willing to lose his voice in the "Choir Invisible" when it chants either the Miserere or the Gloria in Excelsis. He is a man of proportion, of reality,



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sincerity, honesty, justice, temperance, — intellectual and ethical.

The college man should find a still more fundamental element in himself: the desire to use his sense of good fellowship, his executive power, his ability for speaking, his large graciousness, for ethical and religious ends. This condition is absolute. One may say that this condition is not, however, unique. For the man proposing to become the lawyer or the doctor or the merchant should also use every force of his character for ethical and religious ends. But be it further said that, though there are good lawyers and doctors and merchants who do not use their powers primarily for ethical and religious ends, yet every minister is absolutely and fully to use his powers for ethical and religious ends. The failure to make such a use of them is treason. Therefore, be it affirmed that the college man who finds the elements and qualities of his



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manhood directed toward the highest moral and Christian purposes may believe he is fulfilling a primary condition of becoming a minister.

These five items — good fellowship, executive skill, public speech, qualities of the gentleman, and ethical and religious ends — of course coexist in different proportions in the case of different college men. The divine author of a man's being never allows each of these gifts to be bestowed upon the same recipient in their fullness. What a genius for friendship may go along with a lack of executive power! What skill as an administrator may accompany a low degree of acceptance as a preacher! Ah! the contrasts are great and common. But the student, assessing each of these items at its just value, finally adds up the positive and subtracts the negative quantities. If the result indicates that he has such power in himself as I have tried to interpret, he should consider the



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ministry as a choice among life's callings.

These elements constitute a "call." They represent forces found in oneself which allow one to think with favorable presumption of becoming a minister. It is the testimony of some men that they have heard, as it were, the voice of God speaking to them, as clearly as if he spoke to them audibly, commanding them to become ministers. Such commands are extraordinary, and possibly are less usual now than formerly. I hold that no such categorical imperatives or conspicuous facts are necessary to constitute a "call." I believe that a young man who desires to make his life of the most worth, who wishes to use the years that God gives him most directly and powerfully in the service of God, who has a clear brain and warm heart and fitting presence, may rightly consider himself as one thus called. Any Christian man who believes that he can do more good



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in the ministry than in any other calling, should become a minister. Any young man who believes that he can do more good in any other calling should not become a minister. This is the call of divine common sense. It is the call made by and to Christian character. It may be said, and some have said, that no man should enter the ministry if he can avoid it. That is, he should enter it only with a sense of shrinking. So tremendous are its responsibilities, so delicate its functions, he should not consider himself as at all qualified for it except as he feels the imperative call of duty. But some men do not thus feel. Some men are not gifted with this delicate and far-reaching sentiment which inspires and guides others. I believe, if a young man, studying himself, studying the conditions of his time, thinks that the conditions existing in himself may be employed in the greatest worth to his age and place in the ministry, he



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should become a candidate for the ministry.

But this little volume is not an argument; it is only an appeal of man to man, and appeals should be made brief. I conclude it by presenting testimonies of ablest witnesses regarding the worth, the satisfactions, and the opportunities of the great vocation.



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# IV

# TESTIMONIES REGARDING THE SATISFACTIONS AND THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE MINISTRY

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# CHAPTER IV

## TESTIMONIES REGARDING THE SATISFACTIONS AND THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE MINISTRY

PHILLIPS BROOKS is passing into history as "the ideal minister of the American gospel," as Doctor Holmes, in writing to Bishop Clark, once called him. In the year 1877, speaking to the students of the Divinity School of Yale University, Brooks said:

"I cannot help bearing witness to the joy of the life which you anticipate. There is no career that can compare with it for a moment in the rich and satisfying relations into which it brings a man with his fellow-men, in the deep and interesting insight which it gives him into human nature, and in the chance of the best culture for his own character. Its delight never grows



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old, its interest never wanes, its stimulus is never exhausted. It is different to a man at each period of his life; but if he is the minister he ought to be, there is no age, from the earliest year when he is his people's brother to the late days when he is like a father to the children on whom he looks down from the pulpit, in which the ministry has not some fresh charm and chance of usefulness to offer to the man whose heart is in it. Let us never think of it in any other way than this. Let us rejoice with one another that in a world where there are a great many good and happy things for men to do, God has given us the best and happiest, and made us preachers of His Truth." [1]

Nine years after the giving of this address, in a course of lectures offered to the men of Harvard College on the different professions, Phillips Brooks was called upon to speak on the

[1] Lectures on Preaching delivered before the Divinity School of Yale College. Phillips Brooks, p. 4.



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Ministry. One who was present thus describes the scene.

"I was there in Sever 11, and it was an occasion in the life of Brooks — a great opportunity, and he realized it. The hall was never more crowded. Students stood and sat on the window seats; they seemed to be on each other's shoulders. He tried to be cool and philosophical, and tell them what the ministry was like, as previous speakers had told of the other professions, — he started in that way, but the mass of young men and the upturned faces and the subject got the better of him, till, throwing philosophy and cool statement to the winds, he broke out, 'I can't come here and talk to you of the ministry as one of the professions. I must tell you that it is the noblest and most glorious calling to which a man can give himself.' The torrent once loose, it did not cease till it reached the deep calm of his closing words. One was almost afraid that the whole body of



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young men would rise on the impulse and cry, 'Here am I, send me!'"[1]

Speaking to young men on the satisfactions of the ministry, Henry Ward Beecher said:

"I want to tell you true preaching is yet to come. Of all professions for young men to look forward to, I do not know another one that seems to me to have such scope before it, in the future, as preaching.

"And as my years increase I want to bear testimony. I suppose I have had as many opportunities as any man here, or any living man, of what are called honors and influences and wealth. The doors have been opened, the golden doors, for years. I want to bear witness that the humblest labor which a minister of God can do for a soul for Christ's sake is grander and nobler than all learning, than all influence and power, than all riches. And, knowing so much as I do of society, I have this

[1] Allen's Life of Phillips Brooks, Vol. II, pp. 802–3.



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declaration to make: that if I were called to live my life over again, and I were to have a chance of the vocations which men seek, I would again choose, and with an impetus arising from the experience of this long life, the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for honor, for cleanliness, for work that never ends, having the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come — I would choose the preaching of the Gospel: to them that perish, foolishness; to them that believe and accept it, life everlasting. . . .

There is a deep enjoyment in having devoted yourself, soul and body, to the welfare of your fellowmen, so that you have no thought and no care but for them. There is a pleasure in that which is never touched by any ordinary experience in human life. It is the highest. I look back to my missionary days as being transcendently the happiest period of my life. The



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sweetest pleasures I have ever known are not those I have now, but those that I remember, when I was unknown, in an unknown land, among a scattered people, mostly poor, and to whom I had to go and preach the Gospel, man by man, house by house, gathering them on Sundays, a few — twenty, fifty, or a hundred, as the case might be — and preaching the Gospel more formally to them as they were able to bear it."[1]

Yet, however deep the satisfactions of the ministry may be, the college man does not select it having the enjoyment of these satisfactions as his motive and goal. To him rather the primary concern is: are the opportunities for usefulness in this calling as great as in any other, and are they as great now as they ever were. My own answers to the burning question I have already given. These answers — however inconclusive — I want to

[1] Beecher & Scoville's Biography of Henry Ward Beecher, pp. 592–3.



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supplement by the testimonies made to me of those whose words do weigh.

It is the judgment of Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, of New York, that the opportunities are not only as great as they ever were, but "greater." "Any young man," he says, "entering the ministry today, provided he is a person of solid convictions and has the love of God and man in his heart and appreciates the conditions which as a preacher and pastor he will be obliged to confront, will find himself at a point of immense opportunity and incalculable influence."

The Bishop of the Diocese of New York, Dr. Greer, gives further confirmation. The opportunities are "not only as great but greater; that is for strong, capable, well-furnished and devoted men. They must also be men who possess definite and positive convictions, or rather whose convictions possess them. Such men will obtain a hearing today and their message will be



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eagerly welcomed and received. There is also a great opportunity before the minister today for leadership in social uplift; but this must not bulk too largely in the pulpit, and should always be subordinated to its spiritual teaching and preaching."

Washington Gladden regards a ministry of the present day as "the chance of a lifetime." The minister becomes not only an interpreter of the present, but also a prophet of the future, conditions. He writes:

"I wish that I might draw the attention of some of the young men who will live through this period of fifty years, and who are cherishing the purpose of service, to the work of the Christian ministry. I am far enough from thinking that the church is perfect, or from imagining that all the work of the Kingdom is done by the church. But the church has been, and in increasing measures will be, the vitalizing and inspiring agency in the social move-



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ment. Unless the ideas and forces which the church stands for are at the heart of that movement, it will come to naught.

There is no place in which a man can get nearer to the heart of that movement than in the Christian pulpit. It is sometimes supposed to be a narrow place, but, as a rule, it is as wide as the man who stands in it chooses to make it. And I know no other position in which a man has so many chances to serve the community; in which he is brought into such close and helpful relations with so many kinds of people. The field of the church, under the right kind of leadership, is as wide as the world, and the force of the church is more responsive today than ever before to the right kind of leadership."

Dr. George A. Gordon, of the Old South Church, Boston, gives further and impressive testimony.

"I believe with all my heart that the opportunities for the preacher of today



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are greater than they were when I entered the ministry. But the preacher must be a man of vision. He can no longer learn a system of theology in a theological seminary and go out to retail what he has got wholesale upon large and long-suffering congregations, who will accept anything provided the proper traditional label is on it. The voice of the preacher has become the voice of the prophet. The task is a far more exacting one, and on that very account, an infinitely richer one. There is room in the ministry today for the activity of the highest intellectual and spiritual gifts, and never, I believe, were there such opportunities, since the Apostolic Age, for such service as first-class young men can render in this vocation. For myself, I should have been content, and more than content, I should have been delighted to have spent my days in a town like Temple, Maine, where I had opportunity to think, to study, and



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serve the people in the Spirit; and in return, live in their respect, gratitude, and affectionate confidence."

The pastor of the Clinton Avenue Congregational Church, of Brooklyn, Dr. Nehemiah Boynton, writing out of a long ministry in Boston, Detroit, as well as Brooklyn, makes careful discrimination. He writes:

"A minister's influence runs along two lines. It is direct, and it is indirect. His direct influence pertains predominately to his public utterance, and his indirect, to those quiet unremembered services which he can either initiate or speed along their already projected way.

A minister must share today more generously than a quarter of a century ago his privilege of public utterance. He has no monopoly of it, and no patent on it. The Americans are developing a great ability for public speech, and everybody is addressing the sovereign people. The man who is



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a member of the white-winged force, and engaged with street sweepings during the day dressed in white duck, is found in a swallow tail coat in the evening, addressing an interested company upon the perils, the privileges, and the prerogatives, not to say politics of his calling, and incidentally illuminating his remarks with interesting descriptions of the different revelations which an examination of a day's street sweepings may disclose. He is but a type. Almost every other man in every other calling does his work by day, privately, and talks about it publicly by night.

Now the man who can talk on any subject attractively, enthusiastically, and with at least a show of conviction, gets an audience. People still love to hear vital men speak. No newspaper or magazine can successfully compete with the vital, vibrant, human voice.

A minister in this situation has the same advantage which comes to trade



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when it centers on a given street. He takes his chances with the rest. He has a fair field. The best man wins. If a minister's gospel is for him 'a consuming fire'; if he is aflame with it, audiences will be drawn to his light. He will have his chance, not only in his pulpit, but on public platforms, post-prandial exercises, and every sort of a public occasion. He will have his chance, not because he is a minister, a Reverend by grace of ordination, and a Doctor of Divinity by grace of an academic institution, but because he is a man who believes things, and who says what he believes in a crisp, comprehensive, and commanding manner, with a merciful leaning toward reasonable brevity. The minister's chance for influence through public utterance is greater today, I believe, than ever before, if he will interpret his ministry in terms of the highest needs, and the noblest opportunities of the present age. People still love



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to hear a white, high-souled spirit deliver itself upon the commanding themes. My personal opinion is that on the whole, people go to church to hear such utterance, about as well as ever, but I am confident that they give a minister more chances outside the pulpit to proclaim, man-fashion, his mighty theme, than ever before, only he must proclaim it under the new conditions.

Now regarding the indirect influence of a minister as revealed in his quiet touch of personal influence or his social services to the community at large, I believe the chance for usefulness to be distinctly in advance of any yesterday the ministry has known. Religious conversations today are broad and inclusive. They have regard to the entire life. There is a freedom and lack of reserve about them which gives a greater chance for influence than when they were concerned quite technically about the symptoms of an



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individual soul. The widening conception of the great inclusions of religion gives the soul, if one may so speak, an offing, and it wants to see itself in its appropriate relationships to its life-surrounding and task, rather than merely in its other-world-challenge or aspiration. Religious conversation today is not infrequently a quiet, earnest, delightful, Christian talk in circumambient relations. The question 'What must I do to be saved?' has been transferred from the mourner's bench to the minister's study; from the public to the private relation, and the chance for helpfulness, as I believe, very greatly enhanced.

Beyond this, a level-headed minister with aspirations for the ethical, æsthetic, and social weal of his community, has an unparalleled chance today. There are so many things in the making, in America. We are reaching out after higher standards and more commanding impulsions, convictions, realiza-



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tions, in every department of life, so that the question for a minister today is not that of chances to get in his work in these relationships which mean the bettering of humanity, but it is the question of the wise selections from the multifarious chances which are his, in view of his particular aptitudes and abilities, and of his physical strength.

You will find in the midst of all the really strong social movements in a great city today, ministers who are lending most efficient aid in 'chipping the bad meat from the municipal heart,' and in 'keeping the good from spoiling,' to paraphrase Will Carleton. The significance of very much of this work is that it is new, untried, foundation work and a man has the chance to build himself into the beginning of what is bound to be in coming years, influences of significant social weal and betterment. Doubtless, this work is hard, perplexing, baffling, tedious, but it is a man's chance and nothing is



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ever realized anywhere, until the mountains of difficulty have been successfully scaled."

The President of the American Unitarian Association offers a similar judgment, held with discernment and in enthusiasm. Dr. Samuel A. Eliot writes:

"I am well assured that for men who love the risks of faith, and the divine adventure, who can live hard and like it, the ministry presents the noblest and most rewarding of careers. The task of the Christian minister today is more difficult than ever before, and it is a good thing for the ministry and for the Christian church that the task is so challenging, and that it taxes every power of manhood. Nothing is to be gained by making the entrance into the ministry easy. The ministry is not a place for slack or selfish persons. Good honesty and sincerity of purpose are not enough. Courage, however heroic, will not completely suffice. These



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qualities are needed, but also the power to teach, to persuade, to console, and the possession, to some extent, of the gift of judicious leadership. For young men with these qualities and gifts the ministry should offer not only the most attractive but positively the most rewarding of all opportunities of service."

The pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle, Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, says, "Never has the ministry of Jesus Christ had such a good chance as now"; and Dr. F. W. Gunsaulus declares, "There never were such opportunities for ministerial success as in the immediate future."

Similar testimony from other ministers also of great place and power could be offered; but enough has been given to prove that the opportunities open to the minister in the present and the near future are as broad as humanity's needs, as divine as the character of the individual man, and as high as human destiny.



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The choice of his entrance through these waiting doors unto the largest and richest usefulness rests, under the grace of God, with the student himself.

THE END



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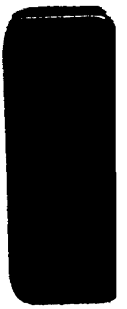

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